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AUTHOR Kohut, Sylvester, Jr.; Blue, Terry W.
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ABSTRACT

Twenty-nine helpful hints for "happy teaching" are suggested as part of a program of social studies teacher preparation. Intended particularly for use by teacher educators in small liberal arts colleges, the paper groups recommendations in the following categories: (1) securing the cooperation and participation of the social science departments and programs of the college; (2) establishing an institutional identity and role for the department of education with special implications for the social studies education component; (3) meeting the letter as well as the spirit of the state certification requirements; and (4) professional acceptance by colleagues in the social sciences. Recommendations include recruiting qualified faculty to serve on special committees, stressing team effort, encouraging social science faculty to offer experimental courses in education, providing media access to information on each program, providing graduate school counseling, and offering program facilities and services for faculty development whenever appropriate. The paper concludes with the recommendation that each college set up individual programs in accordance with specific priorities and long-term goals. (Author/DB)

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SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER PREPARATION IN THE SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE AND/OR SMALL TEACHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

National Council for the Social Studies
56th Annual Meeting
Washington, D.C. November 4-7, 1976

SYMPOSIUM

Sylvester Kohut, Jr., Ph.D.
Dickinson College

Terry W. Blue, Ph.D.
Franklin & Marshall College

In 1939, Harold Benjamin wrote The Saber-Tooth Curriculum. This classical collection of satirical paleolithic essays critically analyzed the problems and issues confronting teacher educators in higher education. Benjamin never envisioned the multitude of problems facing teacher educators today. With drastic drops in student enrollment and the budgetary crunch, the situation requires close investigation, especially for the social studies educator in a small teacher education program. It would be presumptuous to assume that any educator has all the answers to all of the problems. There are some identifiable issues which can be dealt with by the social studies teacher educator. What follows are some "helpful hints for happy teaching" and recommendations for consideration and discussion.

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SECURING THE COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS OF THE COLLEGE

1. After carefully reviewing faculty resumes and recent faculty publications, make arrangements to meet individually with all members in the numerous social science departments and programs. Resumes are usually available from the President, Dean of the College or the respective department chairperson. Copies of most faculty publications are usually available in the library. This initial meeting should be informal. A chit-chat over coffee and donuts in the college cafeteria or a weekend backyard cookout would be ideal. A friendly and cooperative relationship is a must for the enterprising teacher educator in a small institution. Establishing good rapport will pay dividends later when you start planning with the social science faculty in quest of a quality social studies teacher preparatory program.

2. When feasible, recruit qualified faculty to serve on special committees or teacher-oriented community agencies. Submitting the names of prospective faculty to the state department of education for service on program approval teams throughout the state is a very positive step in breaking the ice and challenging some of the "Ivory Tower" ideas and biases of your learned colleagues.

3. With the cooperation of the respective chairperson, identify one person within each department to serve as the official liaison person for teacher education matters. Organizing a social studies curriculum advisory committee is highly recommended. This department liaison person might even be a former classroom teacher. It is amazing how many former teachers are now professors in the social sciences even though they are often reluctant to admit their "humble" beginnings.

4. Provide constant feedback to social science departments about their recent graduates, especially former students now teaching or attending graduate school in education. A questionnaire mailed out with a stamped self-addressed envelope will suffice.

5. Always share timely announcements, bulletins and articles with the appropriate faculty in the social sciences. A brief note attached to a newsletter or newspaper clipping will do wonders for your sociogram rating.

6. Whenever possible encourage and/or require students during methodology classes or micro/macro teaching seminars to meet, observe, and interact with a selected professor in their major social science department. Trying out interaction analysis instruments or systematic methods for classroom observation and evaluation is suggested for this form of professor-student cooperation. The same faculty person can then be invited to observe the student during his/her practicum or associate teaching assignment. Always make sure that the professor is aware of the intent of this activity or else he/she may think that you are intruding.

7. Get faculty in social science departments involved in your local, regional and state affiliates of the National Council for the Social Studies. If possible, serve as the host institution for social studies organizational meetings or conferences. Share NCSS and state publications with social science faculty. Don't be tooooo pushy!

8. Attempt to foster cooperation among the social science faculty and local school district social studies teachers and supervisors. At Dickinson College, for illustration, fifteen academically talented students at Cumberland Valley Senior High School in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, are currently completing a full load of first year courses taught by Dickinson College professors right in their own high school building. Similar, but less formal cooperative and exchange programs, are great ways of getting social studies folks together.

9. Always stress the team effort even when it hurts! For example, if possible secure competency-based teacher education (CBTE) staff development funding from the state department of education and conduct an informal workshop where professors, classroom teachers, recent graduates and selected undergraduates develop role competencies for your social studies teacher preparatory program. A free dinner and a well organized program will win over many social science converts to your cause--a viable and quality teacher preparatory program for the social studies.

ESTABLISHING AN INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY AND ROLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION COMPONENT

1. It is within the highest traditions of the liberal arts to train academically and highly motivated men and women for the teaching professional. Be proud of your role. Don't be defensive. You don't have to defend the institution of education. Stress the quality of your program in a modest manner and take the initiative to provide positive input to all college or community ventures into the real world of teaching.

2. Offer your facilities and services for faculty development whenever appropriate. A workshop during a semester break on verbal and nonverbal communication or new forms of media would be extremely helpful.

3. Provide graduate school counseling services for both your education students and others.

4. Whether you like it or not you are in the teacher placement business. Learn what it is all about.

5. Offer special seminars, courses, field trips and internships to education and interested non-education majors. Stress an interdisciplinary approach in course planning with social science faculty.

6. Encourage talented faculty in the social sciences to offer experimental courses in education. A sociology professor might offer a course in deaf communication and language study. Endorsing a course or recommending that your advisees find out more about a new offering is a good practice.

7. By hook-or-crook, establish yourself as a resource person in matters pertaining to local, state and federal funding. Make sure that you are identified as the contact person for teacher education.

MEETING THE LETTER AS WELL AS THE SPIRIT OF THE STATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. To provide materials and media devoted to the social studies, establish with nearby larger institutions a library exchange or inter-library loan system. This task can be accomplished with the assistance of the head librarian.

2. To further expand materials and media holdings, establish a loan program with local school districts, intermediate or county units and when applicable borrowing procedures with state agencies, and local community organizations like the county historical society.

3. Grant funds from private foundations will assist in the acquisition of materials and media.

4. Encourage social science departments to subscribe to a variety of educationally oriented social science journals and publications such as The Social Studies, Social Education, The History Teacher and Teaching Political Science. If the social science department pays the bill, you save money.

5. Don't try to do everything yourself! Recruit and delegate responsibilities. In the area of media instruction, possibly the director of instructional media at the institution can teach or assist in the teaching of the media and technology course. Let him/her also pay for the equipment and expendable materials.

6. Get social science faculty involved in special methodology seminars and classes. This is critical if your college offers only a general methods course rather than a methods course in the separate subjects for secondary teacher candidates.

7. Topics and subjects mandated by the state can often be incorporated in the weekly associate or student teaching seminars and meetings. You may not have the expertise or time to offer a one semester course concerning the teaching of reading through the separate subjects in the secondary (middle, junior, senior high) school, but a series of special seminars or laboratory sessions may provide this needed or required experience.

8. Seriously consider a block schedule when organizing and developing a teacher education program for most requirements can be introduced into this flexible type schedule.

PROFESSIONAL ACCEPTANCE BY COLLEAGUES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

1. Whenever possible invite faculty to attend and/or participate in nearby inservice programs with local school districts. Let them see you in action.

2. Casually provide selected faculty with courtesy "file" copies of your latest publication or convention paper for their light night reading pleasure.

3. Invite and encourage social science faculty and students to attend on campus social studies oriented meetings and functions. A good program sponsored by the college student education association will usually impress most colleagues.

4. Make sure that you have friends in the media. Do you recall what happened to Richard Nixon? Timely articles about your program in the town paper, college paper and announcements on the college radio station are excellent for public relations.

5. Be Patient! With many social science professors it takes time to wipe away the cobwebs of years in the "Ivory Tower" and a poor understanding of modern teacher education programming. Be your charming self and always professionally prepared and soon you'll be running the college and then you won't have to worry about the task of constant interaction with the social science faculty.

Efforts to deal with the problems of teacher educators and especially the problems and challenges facing social studies teacher educators in small colleges must involve long-term goals. Set your priorities and work from there with your colleagues and students.

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